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PARTNERSHIPS FOR PROGRESS



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CONTENTS

PARTNERSHIPS FOR PROGRESS

- 1 President's Message
A collaboration of mutual discovery and reciprocal reward
- 4 Hand in Hand with Recipients
The collaborative advantage
- 8 Joint Action with Other Donors
Exploiting comparative strengths
- 12 Canada and the South in a Shared Enterprise
Research — a two-way street
- 16 Southern Researchers Join Forces
Common ground, common future

PHOTO CREDITS

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The International Development Research Centre (IDRC) is a public corporation created by the Parliament of Canada in 1970 to help developing countries use science and knowledge to find practical, long-term solutions to the social, economic, and environmental problems they face. Support is directed toward developing an indigenous research capacity to sustain policies and technologies developing countries need to build healthier, more equitable, and more prosperous societies.

PARTNERSHIPS FOR PROGRESS



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

A Collaboration of Mutual Discovery and Reciprocal Reward

Amid all the turmoil and change of the past 30 years, IDRC has been guided by a true and steady purpose: to promote the capacity of people in developing countries to explore, understand, and improve their own futures. The Centre's specific contribution to development is to help generate knowledge — the knowledge to inform strategies of economic and social development that benefit the poor foremost. And since our founding in 1970, IDRC has always understood that development research is a collaborative venture.

1

Indeed, the best development research reflects the conviction that those most familiar with the needs and aspirations of their own communities are best placed to design and conduct research projects. By combining resources and wisdom in new alliances and proven partnerships, IDRC helps create new opportunities — and better results — for research in developing countries.

But there is a deeper principle that underlies IDRC's enduring reliance on partnerships. As a matter of principle, the people of any country are entitled to take part in the decisions that govern their lives. And participation is only meaningful if it is knowledgeable. People need to know the hard facts on which real choices are constructed. They also need knowledge of good governance — procedures of choosing that are open, effective, and democratic. IDRC supports research that can inform those choices, to make them fairer and more productive.

Such research by its nature is a cooperative enterprise — inclusive, transparent, and with an emphasis always on directing benefits to the poorest people of poor countries. That is why we find ourselves natural advocates and practitioners of global networks, the new dynamic of governance. These proliferating networks bring together governments and businesses, scholars and legislators, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and community activists, and international institutions, all in purpose-built coalitions with a common cause. Some networks form for research alone; others seek to accommodate diverse interests in new and better public policy. They typically reach across national borders, transcending traditional boundaries of economic interest, academic discipline, or political preference. More web than hierarchy, a successful network fosters open and equitable participation, facilitating an easy interaction between research insight and practical application.

These are the kinds of partnerships that IDRC has always encouraged. In many ways they reflect the values and recommendations advanced back in 1969 by the

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I 39

Commission on International Development, chaired by Lester B. Pearson. The Commission's influential report, *Partners in Development*, emphasized the significance of global interdependence, and promoted the practical virtues of multilateral cooperation. As well, the Commission stressed the central importance of building the capacity of developing countries to identify and develop their own potential. (Mr Pearson became IDRC's founding Chairman the following year; *Partners in Development* became something of a founding creed for the Centre.)

10 Principles of Partnership

By partnership, IDRC envisages a relationship based on a shared vision and mutual respect that addresses equitably issues of ownership and control; that recognizes fully the different contributions of each partner; that explicitly acknowledges reciprocal rights, obligations, and accountability; and that is conducted in an open, transparent, and collegial manner.

IDRC's partnerships are built on the following principles:

1. **A shared vision:** Effective collaboration requires a commonality of purpose and full intellectual partnership. Partners must share a vision of the value of the research, the intended objectives, the potential outcomes, and the soundness of the methodology.
2. **Joint ownership:** The research protocol should be jointly elaborated, and the division of tasks should be clearly delineated and meet the needs of all partners.
3. **Shared control:** Southern partners should be able to take responsibility for managing the project and funds, to innovate, experiment, and learn.
4. **Reciprocal accountability:** A mechanism is needed to enable all partners to jointly monitor performance and be accountable.
5. **Sustained commitment:** Partners must provide sustained support for the duration of the work, confirming their reliability and commitment and thereby building strong relationships.
6. **Flexibility and versatility:** The partnership must adapt to changing circumstances and accommodate the full range of research support.
7. **Effective communications:** Partners must share information in an open, timely, and collegial fashion. They must respect the communication culture, resources, and perspectives of their partners.
8. **Streamlined administration:** Partners need to simplify, reduce, update, and harmonize their administrative rules and regulations.
9. **Coordination of efforts:** Partners need to communicate with other interested parties — and form alliances with them — to reduce duplicate or conflicting demands on Southern research institutions and help mobilize additional support.
10. **Effective follow-up:** After the end of the project, due attention must be paid to disseminating findings and promoting their use, as well as to building new partnerships to continue the work.

But frankness demands a cautionary word. Partnership and its synonyms have too often been abused in the past as euphemisms to mask the real inequities and disadvantages that the poor countries suffer when dealing with the rich. Genuine partnership is a collaboration of mutual discovery and reciprocal reward. For IDRC, partnerships have repaid themselves many times over in new knowledge, new and productive coalitions, stronger credibility, and a dramatic multiplier effect for IDRC's annual grant from the Parliament of Canada. The long-term political and economic benefits to Canada are literally inestimable.

IDRC's approach to partnerships — and to the primacy of promoting good governance — finds expression in the Corporate Strategy and Program Framework for 2000–2005. The Centre has accelerated efforts to make research findings more available and more relevant to the widest diversity of end-users: local communities, governments, scientists, NGOs, aid donors, and others. And we are concentrating on three priority program areas: social and economic equity; better management of the environment and natural resources; and opening a more equal access to information and communication technologies, so as to close the digital divide that marginalizes the poor.

In Canada, the Centre is placing renewed emphasis on expanding collaboration with domestic partners — especially the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. Furthermore, we see rich opportunities for more extensive alliances between researchers of the South and the Canadian research community. As one example, IDRC is responsible for launching the Institute for Connectivity in the Americas, announced by the Prime Minister at the 2001 Summit of the Americas in Québec City.

IDRC's contribution to these objectives depends crucially on the talents and creativity of our partners. It also depends on money. IDRC has worked closely with CIDA and others for a real increase in Canadian Official Development Assistance (ODA), and for an enhancement of IDRC's own appropriation from Parliament. In addition, we continue discussions on an improved ODA-allocation procedure that would allow IDRC a more active and informed participation in the process.

In sum, IDRC welcomes the better international understanding of partnerships as a valuable instrument for development research. These collaborations reinforce the Centre's own capacity to promote research, with our partners, for the benefit of poor people in poor countries. More than that, the new networks of cooperation help to empower the people of the South themselves to understand their choices more clearly and to advance their own sustainable and democratic development.

Maureen O'Neil
President



4

HAND IN HAND WITH RECIPIENTS

The Collaborative Advantage

IDRC is in the business of supporting researchers in the South. But in the Centre's case, "support" signifies more than funding. It means working in partnership with grant recipients toward a common goal, that of putting research in the service of society in the developing world.

A defining element of the Centre's partnerships is the collaborative relationship between IDRC staff and recipients. Program officers work in close contact with researchers, sharing their knowledge, expertise, and experience. These contributions include helping to develop research proposals; providing relevant literature; identifying professional contacts; arranging training opportunities; and traveling to the field to monitor projects. At the institutional level, IDRC staff also work with organizations in the South to build their technical and administrative capacities.

At first glance, IDRC-recipient partnerships seem to be based on a "hands-on" approach to development assistance. In fact, as the following examples show, Centre support is more in the nature of a helping hand — extended to enhance the ability of Southern researchers to conduct their own research into their own development problems. An evaluation of past IDRC project leaders showed that this nonmonetary support helped them to develop skills, pursue their research agendas, and inform public policy. "IDRC likes you to shine on your own," said one of the project leaders in the study. "It shows you how to swim and lets go. It's up to you to sink or swim."

THE INTERNET AND CIVIL SOCIETY

Although civil society organizations (CSOs) in Central America have been quick to adopt the Internet as part of their day-to-day operations, it has been difficult for them to measure its effects on their work. The technology's relative newness means there is no standard methodology for assessing its impact on organizations. Since the Internet can be a powerful agent of change, such assessments are critical to guide its use. "There are possible negative impacts from the Internet on civil society," notes IDRC Program Officer Ricardo Gómez. "It can not only help build a stronger society, it can also further atomize it."



Dr Gómez helped to develop a six-country research project with the **Fundación Acceso**, a not-for-profit organization that works to strengthen CSOs in Central America. The study used a combination of surveys, case studies, and interviews to assess the Internet's impact on more than 100 organizations in the region. Dr Gómez made important contributions to the project, such as providing input to the research design and the framework for analysis.

"IDRC's contribution cannot be measured only in terms of financial resources but in the permanent involvement of its staff in discussions about goals, methodology, difficulties, and lessons learned during the project," says Kemly Camacho, the project coordinator with Fundación Acceso. "This kind of cooperation from IDRC to our countries sets the Centre apart from other international donors."

The results of the study form part of the paper *The Internet ... Why? and What For?*, cowritten by Dr Gómez and Juliana Martinez of Fundación Acceso. The paper argues that the use of information and communication technologies must contribute to social progress.

(Fundación Acceso Web site: www.acceso.or.cr/PPPP)

"TO PLAN IS TO CHOOSE"

— JULIUS NYERERE, 1965

From a base office in Dar es Salaam, IDRC staff work alongside their counterparts from the Tanzanian Ministry of Health testing an innovative approach to decentralized planning and delivery of essential health services. The idea behind the **Tanzanian Essential Health Interventions Project** (TEHIP) is to improve health, not by spending more money but by planning spending more efficiently, according to where needs are greatest. TEHIP is showing how, by integrating research and

development efforts, health management teams in two districts can develop local plans based on local sources of information and data rather than implementing programs imposed from above. "The strength of the project is its thrust in capacity building," says Dr Peter Kilima, former Director of Preventative Services and long-time collaborator with the project. "The training ... has marshaled the capacity and means to plan, set priorities, and allocate resources. This is an invaluable asset that will continue to be utilized even when TEHIP support to the districts comes to an end."

TEHIP is a joint initiative of IDRC and Tanzania's Ministry of Health. The project is contributing to ongoing national health sector reforms that aim to improve the efficiency and accessibility of health services throughout the country.

(TEHIP Web site: www.idrc.ca/ehip)



NETWORKS: PARTNERSHIPS IN ACTION

Research networks provide another example of IDRC partnership in action. Networking has been at the core of the Centre's philosophy and operations from the start, an explicit recognition that development and the research to support it are by necessity cooperative ventures. For a number of years, IDRC has worked intensively with networks, lending significant intellectual support and investing 25 to 30 percent of its appropriations in networking arrangements.

Made in Asia

Staff in six regional offices act as an "ear to the ground," contributing to IDRC's understanding of research issues and development needs in the South. In Asia,



staff in the Centre's Southeast and East Asia office brought together a network of Asian policy researchers and national research managers in 1997 to examine and organize thinking around key regional development challenges. These included the Asian financial crisis; reforms in social security, aging and long-term care; agricultural liberalization and food security; and the role of social capital. The **Asian Development Research Forum** (ADRF) now has

80 members and is guided by a steering committee chaired by the University of Malaya. It convened its fourth general meeting in June 2001 in Singapore with support from the Thailand Research Fund and the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies. Key meeting themes are defined by working groups on economic integration, aging, and environmental conflict management, all from an Asian perspective. Through collaboration and networking, ADRF members seek to change national research agendas and to increase the impact of research on development imperatives. (ADRF Web site: www.adrf.org)

Joint action on agriculture and natural resource management

On a continent that is so dependent on agriculture, the pool of agricultural researchers in sub-Saharan Africa is relatively small. In the mid-1990s, for example, national agricultural research institutes of 10 countries employed a total 2 300 such scientists, about the same number as in Indonesia alone. IDRC saw an opportunity to help build research capacity through regional collaboration and, accordingly, played a leading role in establishing the **Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa** (ASARECA) in 1994. Working in 10 countries, ASARECA aims to strengthen and increase the efficiency of agricultural research in the region and to facilitate economic growth, food security, and export competitiveness through productive and sustainable agriculture. IDRC contributed to the consultations and studies to develop ASARECA and sat on the task-force that shaped its design. The Centre continues to support ASARECA programs, along with several other donors, and is working with the Association to focus more research attention on natural resource management, gender, and policy development. (ASARECA Web site: www.asareca.org)





8

JOINT ACTION WITH OTHER DONORS

Exploiting Comparative Strengths

If there is one thing 30 years of supporting development research has underscored, it is just how complex development problems are. The steady loss of biodiversity, the overuse of natural resources to the detriment of the poor and marginalized, and the inequities of global trade defy simple solutions. And yet these problems cannot be ignored. Where the need for action has been clearly identified but existing organizations are not up to the task, IDRC has often turned to other like-minded institutions within the donor community for help. International secretariats, many housed within IDRC, are one of the mechanisms by which the Centre mobilizes and leverages the human and financial resources needed to tackle large-scale problems. Independent steering committees drawn from partner institutions and the Southern research community ensure a focused research agenda and efficient operations. The net result: secretariats maximize donor effectiveness and minimize program duplication and cost.

IDRC has also found willing partners to support individual projects funded through its program initiatives: the multidisciplinary, global teams that carry out the bulk of the Centre's research support activities. These mechanisms are among the many ways that, over its history, IDRC has sought to increase the resources available to Southern researchers. Development is a messy business that does not lend itself to a one-size-fits-all approach. There is no denying that shrinking budgets — a reality for many grant-making institutions — have also played a role in IDRC's efforts to expand its funding sources.

"However," says Alain Berranger, Director of IDRC's Partnership and Business Development Division, "IDRC makes it absolutely clear to all its partners and potential partners that we do not want to be seen as just a conduit for money or a

provider of funds. Our interest and responsibility rest in being seen as a donor-partner that engages our Southern counterparts, and many others, from project development through to the final evaluation of results."

That message seems to have fallen on receptive ears: resources from outside IDRC now account for one-quarter of its program spending. With more and more new actors looking to support the scaling up of research and development results in the South, Berranger sees more scope for expanding donor and private sector partnerships. But there is a caveat.

"The bottom line is a fit with IDRC's priorities and programing direction," says Berranger. "Beyond that, if you look at IDRC's partnerships, you'll see a great deal of complementarity among the institutions we work with and a real added-value to the work we do together."

The following examples clearly support his assertion.

OLD FRIENDS RENEW TIES

Over the past two decades, IDRC and the Ford Foundation have collaborated on more than 100 projects covering everything from economic policy to social reconstruction. That relationship is experiencing a bit of a renaissance thanks to a closer working relationship between the two institutions' presidents and a closer collaboration among their regional offices.

- ✦ In Cairo, Egypt, the Foundation's local office is collaborating with IDRC to create a regional research fund for the Middle East and North Africa that will look at ways to improve human health by better managing the local ecosystem. The fund will help build a local expertise in ecosystem approaches to human health, a methodology that IDRC has helped to pioneer.



- ✦ Through their offices in Delhi, India, IDRC and the Ford Foundation are exploring new avenues for promoting the sustainable and equitable development of medicinal and aromatic plants in Asia. An important component in the region's primary health care and in traditional medical practices, such as Ayurveda, the long-term survival of these plants is jeopardized by overexploitation.

SHARED VISION, JOINT ENDEAVOURS

IDRC's history of collaboration with the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Directorate General of International Cooperation is a very active one: the Dutch are the Centre's largest non-Canadian cofunder. This country of some 16 million people is well known for its contributions to human development. One of only four countries to exceed the United Nations target of dedicating 0.7 % of their gross national product to official development assistance, it annually contributes more than \$4.5 billion to development activities. Some of the more notable areas of collaboration with IDRC include

- # **The Secretariat for Institutional Support for Economic Research in Africa (SISERA):** Housed within IDRC 's regional office in Dakar, Senegal, SISERA provides technical and financial support for African economic research institutions. It seeks to build an elite corps of African economists whose research will inform policymakers and enhance the role of civil society in debates about economic policy options.
- # **Resource Centre on Urban Agriculture and Forestry (RUAF):** This is an information clearinghouse for municipal authorities, policymakers, and other stakeholders looking to harness the potential of urban agriculture. While governments recognize the contribution of urban farmers to local employment and to cleaner, healthier cities, many struggle to integrate urban agriculture into sustainable urban management practices. RUAF is one of the resources administered by IDRC 's Cities Feeding People program initiative.



IDRC and CIDA

IDRC and CIDA share a unique relationship. In many instances, IDRC-supported research has pointed to critical development activities that CIDA has subsequently funded. Over their history, the two institutions have collaborated on a range of projects touching on topics as varied as poverty alleviation, women's health, and environmental management in the Ukraine. CIDA's President, Len Good, sits on IDRC's Board of Governors, providing input and direction into Centre programing. In the past year, senior management from both institutions met to discuss strategic directions and areas for further collaboration.

An enduring example of IDRC's and CIDA's long partnership is the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), an informal association of 58 public and private sector members that supports agricultural research for farmers in the developing world. Agriculture still plays a critical role in the development of poor countries, where over 70 percent of the people depend on the land for their livelihood. As members of CGIAR, CIDA and IDRC are helping to promote sustainable agricultural development based on the environmentally sound management of natural resources. This support is also benefiting Canadian farmers. Thanks to the work undertaken in 2 of CGIAR's 16 international agricultural research centres, for example, Saskatchewan farmers now have a new crop to replace less profitable wheat and canola: chickpeas. In 1995, only 80 hectares of chickpeas were planted in the province. Five years later, Canada has become the world's largest exporter of chickpeas, with sales topping \$160 million in 2000: 98% of Canada's chickpea crop is grown in Saskatchewan.

11





CANADA AND THE SOUTH IN A SHARED ENTERPRISE

Research – A Two-way Street

In 2001, IDRC President Maureen O'Neil told conferences of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) and Ryerson University that some of the new bounty Canadian universities will enjoy from the Canada Foundation for Innovation and the Canada Research Chairs needed to be directed to increased research collaboration with Southern researchers. "The university atlas must include the developing regions of the world," she said.

IDRC had heeded the call to link Canadian and developing-country knowledge institutions 20 years earlier when, at the government's request, it established a cooperative program to bring research institutions into closer partnership. The Canadian commitment was in direct response to the proposal by developing countries at the 1979 United Nations Conference on Science and Technology for Development that "direct linkages should be established between the research and development systems of developed and developing countries." Today, partnerships between Southern and Canadian researchers are an integral part of IDRC's programing: in 2000/01, for instance, about 13 percent of the Centre's budget was used to support Canadian collaboration. And if the intent then was to help bridge the developing world's scientific and technological gap, now it is equally dictated by the challenges of globalization.

FORGING BROAD-BASED ALLIANCES

These linkages build on an existing — and abiding — interest on the part of Canadians in the developing world. To enhance that understanding IDRC seeks

to enable a variety of groups in Canada to contribute to, and benefit from, international cooperation. A case in point are the universities: IDRC helped strengthen development scholarship by contributing to the establishment of chairs at the University of British Columbia and Laval University. An IDRC grant is helping to transform McGill University's Centre for Developing Area Studies into an interuniversity research centre for international studies involving three other Québec universities. And IDRC is now engaged in the second round of a joint venture with the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the "Canada in the World" Research Grants.



The flip side of "Canada in the World" is "the World in Canada." And that world is represented by a wealth of institutions and organizations. Some, such as AUCC, the Canadian Council for International Co-operation, and the Canadian Association for the Study of International Development, offer IDRC linkages with important constituencies: universities, NGOs, and development scholars, respectively. Others are notable for the importance they accord to involving citizens — particularly

youth — in international issues, in innovative ways, from media fellowships to cross-Canada tours of The Global Change Game, an interactive, award-winning program that educates people about global issues. As students in Okotoks, Alberta, wrote after participating in the game: "We gained a better understanding of the issues challenging us in our international community both in the present day, and in the future. On a smaller scale, we also learned the valuable tools of cooperation, communication, and responsibility."

MANY APPROACHES, MULTIPLE BENEFITS

Partnerships between Canadians and their Southern counterparts can take many forms, and bring many benefits. Here are some examples.

Cross-national education for sustainable development

How can communities be part of the global economy while maintaining environmental practices that will sustain development in the future? This was what 174 participants from 31 countries — all midcareer professionals from a variety of disciplines — tried to determine in August 2000 as they pondered how to balance resource extraction with tourism in British Columbia communities. In 1998, these associates in the Leadership for Environment and Development (LEAD) International program had delved into the intricacies of water management on China's Loess Plateau. Founded in 1991 by the Rockefeller Foundation, LEAD's mission is to develop a global network of leaders who are able to develop policies that emphasize sustainable and equitable use of the Earth's resources. Canada was



the first industrialized country to join LEAD in 1994: today there are 12 member programs of LEAD International, encompassing more than 40 countries. IDRC has supported 85 Canadians in the LEAD Canada program.

Training the trainers: a new university learns to do research

Process is often as important as content. This is certainly the case in a collaborative community-based natural resource management project in Laos that links York University (Canada), the University of Sydney (Australia), Chiang Mai University (Thailand), and the National University of Laos (NUOL). The goal: to build research capacity at the very new NUOL by carrying out small projects on natural resource management and food security, both critical issues for Laos' largely rural population. Because NUOL's faculty members have limited research experience, a great deal of attention is devoted to introducing them — in the Lao language — to a wide range of applied research methods and concepts. Equally important, says project leader Peter Vandergeest of York University, Toronto, the project is helping them develop a picture of the larger, critical role universities can and should play in the country — generating knowledge at the local level that can influence national policy. The participation of Chiang Mai University, a rural university that has become a regional centre, is crucial in this regard. For Vandergeest, many rewards come from "the opportunity to learn about a new country, new issues, a new context." Parallel funding for the project comes from the Rockefeller Brothers Fund and the East-West Center (Hawaii).



An award-winning collaboration in Cuba

In the inner city core of Havana, Cuba, 170 000 people crowd in just over 3 square kilometres of tenements, with few municipal services. Ill health and violence flourish. To improve the situation, the city launched a pilot project in 1996: an intensive rehabilitation program of Cayo Hueso, one of the districts, carried out by and for the community. To help determine how best to use their scarce resources, the National Institute for Hygiene, Epidemiology, and Microbiology (INHEM) and the University of Manitoba assessed community needs.

The partnership continues in an evaluation that is linking INHEM with neighbourhood popular councils, community urban development groups, and the University of Manitoba. The university contributed skills and research knowledge and helped develop methods of determining the effectiveness of measures taken to improve life in Cayo Hueso. Jean Lebel, team leader of IDRC's EcoHealth program initiative, considers that "the Cuban and Manitoban research teams both benefited enormously by being able to develop a methodological approach that is on the cutting edge of a new field: applying an ecosystem approach to understanding human health." Ultimately, he says, "the scientific community at large as well as other countries with the same type of development problems could benefit." In January 2001, the project was awarded the Cuban Academy of Sciences Award (Health), one of the most prestigious scientific recognitions in Cuba.





SOUTHERN RESEARCHERS JOIN FORCES

Common Ground, Common Future

Throughout the South, researchers are working to find ways of overcoming their nations' development challenges. Their task is made all the more difficult in that they often work in isolation from their colleagues in other countries. They can be physically isolated — working in remote communities — or lack the physical and financial resources to connect with like-minded researchers.

Yet, the benefits they can gain from learning from one another and working together are significant. Southern researchers know Southern realities better than anyone. What works in one country may work in another. Moreover, pooling talents and resources to work on shared problems makes sense: not only is it a way to make use of scarce resources, but it also recognizes that some problems simply cannot be solved alone. Whether they are related to a geographic system, a hydrological system, or an economic system, some challenges transcend national boundaries.

IDRC's approach is based on a belief in the value of research in the South, by the South, for the South. Supporting researchers in different countries to work together to solve common challenges is one way this plays out in practice — by fostering research networks and by bringing together partners from various countries to work on shared problems.

PALESTINIAN AND ISRAELI SCIENTISTS WORK TO PROTECT CRITICAL WATER RESOURCES



The single best source of drinking water for both Israelis and Palestinians comes from a shared aquifer. If this aquifer is over-pumped, or otherwise unsustainably used, it could be irrevocably ruined — depleted, polluted, or contaminated with saline water. Since 1993, with support from IDRC, researchers from Israel and from Palestine have been working together to develop an approach for jointly managing the Mountain Aquifer that underlies their borders — a project clearly in the interests of both. These researchers, who previously were isolated from one another, have continued to collaborate regardless of breakdowns in the peace process.

The Mountain Aquifer underlies the central mountain ridge and stretches 150 kilometres from the West Bank into Israel. Because the aquifer's properties were not well

understood — most of the flow is westward toward Israel, but some is eastward into Palestine — researchers first carried out hydrological research. They then developed a detailed model of how the aquifer could be jointly and sustainably managed, which they are promoting to policymakers from both Israel and Palestine. Special attention was paid to appropriate management during periods of drought, which are common in the region. IDRC support for this project, which was completed in 1999, was directed toward researchers from Palestine. The Charles R. Bronfman (CRB) Foundation funded the Israeli component of the project.

LATIN AMERICAN RESEARCHERS FOCUS ON WORLD TRADE NEGOTIATIONS

When it comes to international trade negotiations, developing countries are at a significant disadvantage. Northern countries have hundreds of policy analysts examining world and regional trade issues from various angles — these analyses are used by negotiators at the bargaining table. But developing-country negotiators come to the bargaining table less prepared and with far fewer materials tailored to their country's realities. In the highly charged world of international trade negotiations, this means Southern negotiators are less able to limit threats and maximize opportunities.

With support from IDRC, the Latin American Trade Network (LATN) was created in 1998 to build a network of scholars and public policy analysts who could examine trade issues from a Latin American perspective. From labour standards to the environment to competition policy, the group is analyzing critical trade issues on the regional and World Trade Organization agenda. Latin American governments have considered LATN's analyses in setting policy. Negotiators have also used them. In fact, network researchers have been able to identify issues of joint concern, pointing out opportunities for bargaining coalitions. The network is also helping to broaden debate on trade issues in Latin America. As project leader Diana Tussie, a senior research fellow at FLACSO (the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences) puts it: "LATN is providing hands-on debate of issues that were handled by diplomats with little participation and accountability. There is now a network of people who feel that they can share issues and can move things on the ground with support from colleagues."

Other agencies supporting this network include the Inter-American Development Bank, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, the Instituto para la Integración de América Latina y el Caribe, the International Institute for Sustainable Development, and the Ford Foundation.





PREVENTING DEGRADATION OF THE WORLD'S HIGHEST MOUNTAIN REGION

The Hindu Kush–Himalayan region — the world's highest mountain zone — stretches 3 500 kilometres over eight countries from Afghanistan in the west to Myanmar in the east. This mountain system is home to more than 140 million people and affects the lives of three times as many in the plains and river basins below. But the region's natural resources — soil, water, forests, pastures, and biodiversity — are being rapidly depleted. This spells disaster for the people who depend on them for their survival.

19

Because the mountain system is interconnected — for example, a dam built in one country affects water supply in another — a piecemeal approach to solving problems ends up treating the symptoms rather than the cause. To develop an integrated approach to sus-

tainably managing the mountain system — one that doesn't lose touch with the microlevel realities of the people living in mountain communities — IDRC has brought together researchers from China, India, Pakistan, and Nepal. The team is focusing its research on small and medium-scale watersheds. They started by gathering baseline data and putting in place mechanisms for monitoring the rapidly changing dynamics between human activity and the environment. To date, the team has generated the most comprehensive hydrometeorological data of the region. This information has been translated into numerous development projects at the community level. For example, communities have worked together to rehabilitate degraded land, limit soil erosion, and address drinking and irrigation water shortages. The team's research has also influenced national government policy. This project is also being supported by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation.

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